

A BOY'S BOOK
A of PRAYERS

Robert Merrill Bartlett

John Michael

Love

From Grandma Venen



A BOY'S BOOK OF PRAYERS

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ROBERT MERRILL BARTLETT

Author of
Builders of a New World

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TO MY MOTHER
who taught me my first prayer

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I.

MYSELF

ACHIEVEMENT

FOR QUIETNESS

DEAR FATHER, when I am alone in my room or out with the beauty of Nature, my heart is often filled with a wonderful peace. I realize in these moments how much I can gain by keeping my life controlled by thy Spirit.

Forgive me when I am too busy to pray. I feel unsatisfied when I fail to give thee time to speak with me. Teach me to take a few minutes each day when, all alone, I can think about thee. Help me to get away from that which makes me cross and nervous, and to think about peace. Release me from complaining and tiredness, and speak to me with thy quiet voice.

Amen.

FOR SINCERITY

I WANT always to ring true, Divine Leader. May I not be a hypocrite, boasting of my goodness or posing for credit which I do not deserve. May I never deceive or cheat people in any way. Make me four-square to the right, always true to myself and others.

Sometimes I want to be showy like glittering tinsel, or boastful like shiny brass; but my better self speaks to me and says, "Be pure gold, for the world will see through and know you for what you are." It is hard to follow this inner voice when I see so much counterfeit being accepted in the world. Oh, keep me from selling myself for a little popularity or momentary success. Keep me from trying to gain through make-believe, and help me to build, day by day, those genuine qualities which will make me a strong Christian. Give me power to be my true self all the time! *Amen.*

FOR MORAL COURAGE

O FATHER, I am a coward. Today I turned from what I knew was right and gave in because I was afraid of some one's taunts. Forgive me for surrendering to the fear of what others might say. Give me the courage to resist wrong and to follow the voice of my conscience. May the danger of being laughed at or being called unpopular never frighten me from being true to thy inner voice.

When I feel afraid and alone, may I realize that thou art near at hand, ready to help me defeat my cowardly fears. *Amen.*

FOR COURTESY

I KNOW that courtesy is an attribute of true manhood, and I pray that I may cultivate good manners. Help me to remember that words of kindness often make the day for some one. When I feel grouchy, keep me from speaking a surly good morning at the breakfast table. Keep me from being rude to my brothers and sisters, and make me especially considerate of my parents, treating them always with tenderness. Help me to be chivalrous toward womanhood, to act as the protector of children, and to show respect to those who are old. Give me the will to be gracious toward others, and help me to make my character likable and gallant. *Amen.*

FOR TEMPERANCE

DEAR FATHER, help me to make the high desires of my self master over the low desires. Give me strong will power which will keep me from being a slave to any habit. May smoking never hold me in its slavery and make me surrender to its narcotic spell. May I be man enough to keep away from all intoxicating drinks, which poison the mind, destroy personality and make men act like savages.

Give me the moral strength to resist gluttony and dissipation, and the good sense to keep my body free from injury and my mind clean and efficient. Help me to avoid all abuses and to be temperate in my habits of food, drink and pleasure. *Amen.*

FOR COURAGE TO PLAY THE GAME

WHEN the game is going against me and there seems little chance to win, when there is a whole half to be played and I am hot and tired and sick at heart, then I pray, Divine Comrade, for strength to play the game! It is easy enough to play when I am winning, when I feel fresh and there are no odds against me; but when things are going wrong and I am tempted to cheat, to grumble or to quit, then I need thy help.

I want to take life as a game and play it fair and hard. To do this I need some strong leader, so I pray that thou wilt always be with me. When I am a coward or tired or baffled, give me the sense that thou art by my side, telling me how to plan my way and giving me the courage to keep on. Be with me in the contest of today and all through life's course. *Amen.*

FOR HEALTH

CURRENTS of life are surging all about me in the world of Nature. Help me, my Father, to live like the vigorous trees, in tune with thy laws, in which are strength and life. I know that thou wilt help me as I seek to keep well and to grow stronger. Thou art the maker of the health and goodness of the world, so I pray to live in harmony with thy ways.

Give me a knowledge of the laws of health that I may keep myself fit. May I grow into the full stature of manhood, possessing a body that is pure and disciplined. Give me resistance against sickness, and help me to build up a more hardy defense against the foes of my body and mind. *Amen.*

FOR SELF-CONTROL

FATHER, help me to control my thoughts and actions as Jesus did. When I am angry and feel like striking some one, help me to remember that it is base and cowardly to give way to outbursts of passion. When my heart fills with hatred and bitter words rise to my lips, keep me from storming against others or swearing at those who wrong me.

When conflicts come to my mind, at home, at school, or on the field of sport, help me to think what Jesus would do at such a moment, so that I may always be calm and self-controlled. *Amen.*

FOR A WORTHY CAREER

I PRAY that high ambitions may guide me, that I may always keep in mind the goal for which I am working. As I study my daily lessons and go about my tasks, help me to keep my big purpose before me so that I shall not get discouraged or give up through thinking only of the little job at hand. May I be dissatisfied with second-rate ambitions and seek for the highest place that I can fill.

Guide me in my plans. Help me to choose a career which will fit my talents, a life work in which I can be successful. I pray for a vocation of usefulness, a big and challenging life which will draw out the best that is in me, and which will lead me to play my part in making the world better. *Amen.*

FOR EVERYDAY DEVOTION

DEAR FATHER, help me to realize that "faith without works is dead," that I must not only read my Bible, pray and worship but must have a religion which will make me play fair in every game, be willing to serve others, guard my lips against foul words, and keep cheerful when things go against me. May I think of each day as my chance to live the Christian life. May I put consecration into my studies, home duties, and every task I undertake. May laziness and cowardice be driven out by my desire to be a real worker for Christ.

Give me, I pray thee, a religion such as the Master had, a religion which will make me pure, brave and kind every hour of the day. *Amen.*

FOR THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY

FATHER, thou art the giver of my life, my talents and everything I have. As the holder of these gifts I want to use them according to thy plan. Teach me the right attitude toward money.

Help me to succeed that I may have money to use, but keep me from making it the chief aim of my life. May I work for more than dollars, and be wise enough to put what I possess into those investments that bring good to others.

Forgive me for having wasted my money and having used it selfishly. Help me to understand that it is not to be carelessly spent but to be used as a sacred trust. I pray that I may show appreciation of my happiness by giving thee regularly a part of all I make. *Amen.*

FOR STRENGTH

GOD OF MIGHT, make me strong of heart. May I be like the rugged oak, straight and firm against temptation. When I am asked to do that which is cowardly or unclean, may I be strong enough to say no. Give me power to stand for what I believe is right; to think for myself and to overcome doubt and fear.

When I am tempted to weaken in my ideals, to turn against my conscience and go with the crowd, give me the courage I need. When I am about to be a quitter, help me to brace up and keep bravely on. In all these times of weakness I pray for the power to hold fast and to win. *Amen.*

ASPIRATION

O FATHER, a great longing comes over me, a feeling of sadness and joy so mixed that I cannot express it. I think it must be thy Spirit calling me. I want to be free from all my sin, to be pure and noble. I am weak and unworthy! I long to be better, to forget myself and to go to the end of the world to do something wonderful for others. I want to help the poor and suffering. My heart aches because I have so much; I feel I must give up everything and live as Jesus lived.

Father, I yield myself to thee. Oh, make me one of those great leaders whose life brings love and peace into the world! *Amen.*

FOR PERSEVERANCE

I WANT to be a boy with the grit to drive through to the end of all my tasks. Help me to complete everything I undertake to do. Keep me from working half-heartedly and quitting before reaching my goal. Divine Helper, when I am tired and lose my ambition, fill me with the fire and determination that make heroic men, with the power that will make me forget myself in a big desire to win what I have set my heart on. Give me backbone to stand up to life and to persevere as did the heroes I long to follow. *Amen.*

FOR RESPECT FOR LAW

I AM grateful for the government of my nation which protects me from danger and makes it possible for me to be free and happy. Help me to uphold its laws. May I never be guilty of destroying public property or making light of regulations about quietness, cleanliness and decency.

Help me when driving a car not to lose my head for the sake of a momentary thrill and thus endanger the lives of others as well as my own. May I have backbone enough to resist the company of those who flip-pantly break the law. Help me to make my community what it ought to be by respecting its laws and being a public-spirited citizen.

Amen.

FOR HELP TO PRACTICE THE GOLDEN RULE

HELP me to practice the Golden Rule, to be more considerate of other people, realizing that they have feelings just like mine, which can be hurt and offended. May I remember that they want kindness and courtesy just as much as I do. When I start to criticize harshly, may I think how I should feel if some one said a mean word about me. May I speak the good and not the bad, and help to boost people up instead of knocking them.

Keep me from being a hermit, shut up with my own wants, a greedy fellow who takes all he can get and thinks only of himself. May I think of other people, and try always to do to them as I would have them do to me. *Amen.*

I.

MYSELF

OVERCOMING

FOR OVERCOMING FALSE PRIDE

FORGIVE me, Father, for being proud, for setting myself up as superior. Help me to realize that all I have has come to me through the love of others, that people will know me for what I am, and that boasting will gain me nothing.

May I keep back the haughty words that sometimes come to my lips when my parents try to advise me. Help me conquer the stubborn feeling that makes me want to keep on doing what is wrong and resisting what is right for me to follow. Make me more willing to admit my faults and to ask forgiveness when I have wronged others. Teach me to be more forgetful of myself and more humble toward those about me.

Amen.

FOR OVERCOMING SHIRKING

I AM always putting off my work and fooling away my time. I plan to begin, but I am easily lured off into doing what is more pleasant and nearer at hand. I come to thee in my weakness, Divine Leader, to pray for strength to quit dallying and go to work with my whole heart. I am ashamed of my lack of will power. O, teach me to discipline my mind so that I can work with a system and get things done.

May I not waste time in making decisions and changing from one thing to another. Help me see clearly what I should do and then begin with all my might. Thou art the helper of all who seek thee, and I know thou wilt hear my prayer and strengthen me. *Amen.*

IN SORROW

DEAR FATHER, a deep sorrow has come into my life; I am unhappy and helpless. Now that I am baffled and can go no farther alone, I need some power to support me. I come to thee, O loving Friend, because I feel that thou wilt help me. Keep me from being bitter against thee; help me to be drawn closer to thy love, and be made more sympathetic toward others who have sorrow to bear.

May I meet my heartache with courage and prove that I trust thee by bearing my trouble with a sweet spirit. I do not know why this sorrow has come to me, but I will try to have faith even though I cannot understand. O give me strength to bear it and to keep bravely on! *Amen.*

FOR OVERCOMING TEMPTATION TO CHEAT

I AM ashamed every time I act the part of a cheat, when I cheat in my marks, fail to play the game squarely, or try to deceive people. Father, I pray to be forgiven for my deception, for the wrong I have done others, and the false credit I have given myself.

Keep me from being a pretender. Make me fair in my dealings with people, and truthful and sincere. May I be brave enough to stop all make-believe and to be my honest self. *Amen.*

FOR OVERCOMING IMPURE THOUGHTS

I PRAY that my life may be so completely ruled by thy Spirit that impurity can find no place in it. When my friends do things that I feel are not right, or use language that is not worthy of a Christian, may I have courage not to soil my mind by letting the obscene enter there.

Cleanse me from all that is degrading. When low desires tempt me, may the stronger desire for self-respect and nobility expel them from my mind. Help me to keep out those thoughts which I am ashamed to bring before thee. *Amen.*

FOR COMFORT IN UNHAPPINESS

O FATHER, my home has often been filled with trouble and sorrow. I have few of the comforts and pleasures of other boys. It seems I have nothing in my whole life to point to with pride. Sometimes I am bitter and rebellious because I cannot possess the things I desire.

Help me somehow to be happy in spite of my limitations, and to look beyond clothes and social standing to the qualities of life that are worth more than money. May I be thankful that my parents gave me a good character and a healthy body. May I care less about what the world thinks, simply love the good and beautiful, and fight hard to find happiness. *Amen.*

FOR OVERCOMING IGNORANCE

I PRAY for the full development of my mind. Help me to realize that ignorance is a poor excuse for failure. Give me grit to go through school studying hard so that I can be a leader and a successful man.

Help all boys of America to want the best education possible, in order that poverty, disease and misunderstanding may disappear. May those in other countries have schools, libraries and newspapers which will help them learn how to grow food, fight plagues, and enjoy the comforts of life. I am thankful that I was born in a land where all men are given a fair chance. May I work for the enlightenment of the world. *Amen.*

IN DISCOURAGEMENT

MY GREAT COMPANION, I have not made good. My work has been too hard for me, and folks have not understood me. I am discouraged as I sit here wishing and longing for what might have been. I hate myself for having failed and gotten into this tangle. But thou art my friend, and I come to pour out my heart to thee. Thou art the helper of those in trouble. Oh, help me to get out of this unhappy mood and make up for my bungling by proving that I can succeed.

Give me confidence. Help me to master the habits that make me blue and keep me from doing my best. Give me enthusiasm to fight until I conquer all discouragements and become victor over my temptations. *Amen.*

FOR OVERCOMING TEMPER

O GOD, my Father, how can I atone for what I have done! Why did I lose control of myself and say those hasty and spiteful words! Forgive my angry outburst. I did not mean what I said. I am always sorry afterward.

Help me not to lose my temper again, but to think before I flare up and say what hurts others and brings shame to myself. When I cannot have my own way at home or on the athletic field, or when my friends hurt my feelings, help me to choke back the mean words that come to my lips. O Father, I believe that thou hast power to help me out of my weakness. Give me the assurance that by thinking often of thee I can become master of my temper. *Amen.*

IN SICKNESS

NOW that I am shut in and sick I feel the need of thy help more than ever. It may seem that I forget thee sometimes when I am well and happy, but I do not intend to be forgetful. Forgive me for my selfishness. Some of the things I used to care about seem foolish now, for I realize how unimportant they are.

Help me to meet pain bravely without rebelling at my lot. Give me strength to get well again. I pray, also, for others who are sick, for those who have been shut in for years, and for those who endure terrible suffering. Be near them to comfort and give them strength. *Amen.*

FOR FORGIVENESS

MY FATHER, thou knowest all my thoughts and deeds, how often I have sinned and failed to follow Jesus' way. I am ashamed when I have been untrue, and miserable when I am separated from thee by the wrong I have done.

Wilt thou forgive me, for I am sincerely sorry! I promise that I will try harder than ever before to do right. Make me clean from all my mistakes and give me strength to conquer habits that injure me and those about me. Help me to aim at Jesus' pattern for my life and to hit the mark, that I may be free from sin and regret. *Amen.*

II

FRIENDS AND HELPERS

FOR MY MOTHER

I THANK thee for all my mother has done, for years spent in training me, in nursing me through sickness, and in guiding me day by day. Forgive me when I have been unworthy of her wonderful love. I cannot bear that she should see me being untrue to her hopes. Help me to live up to her faith in me, and to fill her life with happiness by making a success of my own. May I be more considerate and express my love for her in every way I can. No matter where I go, may I keep in my heart the ideals of character which I have learned from her, and make them the guiding force of my life. *Amen.*

FOR MY FATHER

I THANK thee for my father. There is no one who means more to me. I am thankful for his companionship and for all he has done to give me a good home and an education. His love has taught me to believe in a spiritual Father, for there must be some great power that makes people willing to live for others. I feel that thou, like him, art interested in me, and ready to hear and help me when I talk with thee.

Dear God, bless my father. May he have health and success, and live many years with me. Make me more deserving of his love, and help me to be a true comrade to him.

Amen.

FOR MY HOME LIFE

DEAR FATHER, help me to be worthy of my home. I should be more grateful than I have been. I am ashamed of the times I have been inconsiderate, when I have complained and criticized unkindly, when I have disregarded the advice of my parents. I am sorry that I have hurt them. Forgive me and help me to make it up through words and deeds of kindness.

Help me to be courteous and thoughtful of my brothers and sisters. May I do my share in making our home life happy. Teach me to be patient when I am tempted to scold and find fault. May I be a worthy son and an example of the Christian character which my home has given me. *Amen.*

FOR MY CHURCH LIFE

HELP me to be loyal to the Church. I thank thee for the Christian training it has given me, for the friendship of the ministers, the teachers, and those who work for its success. Help me to do my share in its worship service, in its classroom and social activities. May I support its program by giving freely of myself and all I have. I pray that the Church may spread throughout the world and bring the ideals of Jesus into the lives of all people. *Amen.*

FOR PATRIOTISM

GOD of my fathers, my heart beats with pride when I think of my native land, a nation built by the lovers of freedom as a refuge for the people of the world. I thank thee for the brave forefathers who suffered to found America, for those who have worked in field and factory, for pioneers in science and learning, and for all who have helped build this marvelous land.

Father of mankind, thou art the God of all nations. Men everywhere worship thee. I pray that I may be more than a proud patriot of my own country. May I see America's duty to the world and be a citizen of the higher patriotism, which works not for one nation only, but for all mankind. Help me to remember that the best service I can give my country is to lead a true Christian life.

Amen.

FOR NEW AMERICANS

FATHER of all people everywhere, bless the new Americans who come in year by year from foreign lands. Help them in their loneliness to find friends, to get work and to be happy. May they feel that America is their country.

Help us, as people from all countries, to live together in this great world-nation. May we forget all differences of color and language and work for the future of our land, seeking to make it a home of freedom and brotherhood. Help me to be more considerate of these immigrants, remembering that they may have more to give to America than I have. May I never speak disrespectfully of them, but treat them as my brothers and work with them for a greater America.

Amen.

FOR THE UNFORTUNATE

LOVING FATHER, when I think of the boys of the world who are without parents or homes, who live in the slums or in countries suffering from war and famine, I realize how happy my life has been. I pray for those who do not have my opportunities to go to school but must work from childhood for their own bread. I feel selfish when I think of boys who have none of the pleasures that I take for granted, who long for chances they never can have.

I know that these less fortunate boys are my brothers. Teach me to share with them through the giving of my money and friendship that they may have a happier life.

Amen.

FOR GIRL FRIENDSHIPS

I THANK thee for my friendship with girls, in home and church and school, for their companionship and inspiration. Help me to choose girl friends for their beauty of character and to judge my life by the same high standards I require of them.

Help me to keep that respect toward them that I have for my mother and sisters, and always to be considerate and courteous. May I never lower my manhood by joining in cheap talk about girls or in any way be guilty of offending womanhood. May I enjoy their friendship in a wholesome and straightforward way but keep that great treasure of my love until the day when I can give it with all self-respect to the one I shall choose for my life-companion. *Amen.*

FOR MY HELPERS ALL OVER THE WORLD

I THANK thee, Father, for all that other people do for me. Food, books and clothes, light and heat, trains, ships and aeroplanes are a part of my life, because people all over the world have given their services to make others comfortable. I am grateful for these helpers who make my life rich.

Bless my friends in factory, field and mine, on land and sea and in the air. May they have happiness in their own lives. No matter what their nationality or color, I pray that they may get much joy out of life. Help me also play my part and be of use in the world. *Amen.*

FOR FRIENDSHIP

DEAR UNSEEN FRIEND, I thank thee for the gift of friendship that makes people care for one another, for the power of love that drives out that which is greedy and mean in human hearts.

I thank thee for those who make my life happy. May I give them comradeship and love in return. Keep me from being fickle, and make me dependable and loyal.

Guide me in my friendships that I may choose high-minded and worthy companions, whose association will make me a better man and who will be my life-long friends. Above all, I want thee as my closest companion through life. *Amen.*

III

THE WORLD OF BEAUTY

THE MORNING

O LIGHT which scatters the shadows that have hidden the flowers and darkened the streets, thou art God's messenger to me.

O God, be the light of my mind, as the sun is the light of the day. Take away every evil thought that leaves its shadow there. Drive out the darkness of anger, selfishness and impurity. Make me the center of thy sunshine, that I may reflect thy Spirit and scatter cheerfulness about me. May I, with the birds and fields, catch the joy of the morning and carry from this prayer the feeling of thy nearness all through the day. *Amen.*

IN THE WOODS

MAKER of trees, flowers and birds, I love to steal away to the Temple of the Out-of-Doors and think of thee. I gaze through the branches to the river and the meadows; the woodland is still except for the calls of birds and the stirring of leaves in the summer air.

As I lie on the warm earth and look out toward the sunlight, I pray that I may live closer to Nature, that I may have the calm spirit of the out-of-doors, be brave like the creatures of the woods, and clean and upright like the trees. Help me to keep my life in tune with the law of the forest. *Amen.*

AT THE SEASHORE

I FEEL that Thou art very near as I look out on the wonder of the ocean. When the ships are sailing off toward the sunset sky and to distant lands, when the beach echoes with the thunder of the deep, my heart turns to thee as the maker of this majestic scene. The endless water, the rising tide, and the roar of the breakers tell me something of thy power.

I thank thee, God of Nature, for the ocean, for the treasures that it holds, for the courage that it teaches, for its ships and islands and inspiring beauty. May I have more faith in thy power to help me do wonderful things.

Amen.

ON A WINTER NIGHT

THE vast white world speaks to me, God of all life, of thy guidance through the changing seasons. The snow falls softly, covering the world with its purity; all that was dirty is clean for tonight. The earth seems more wonderful under this sparkling blanket. The streets are still and every doorstep weighed down with a mantle of peace. I forget my tiredness and disappointments as the warm fire glows and the out-of-doors glistens in crystal beauty.

Thy glory comes over me and I kneel by my window spellbound before the whiteness and stillness of the world, O Master Artist.

Amen.

IN THE MOUNTAINS

I THINK of Thee as I look out over the green valleys to the mountain peaks. The whole earth seems silent and peaceful. The clouds move off into the unending sky, and my thoughts go with them out into the bigness of the world.

I thank Thee for the thrilling, uplifting beauty of the sky and hills! As I watch them, all the low desires go out of my heart, and I pray that I may be stronger and nobler than I have ever been before. May this marvelous vision go with me when I return home, and help me to live a mountain-top life. *Amen.*

ART

I AM thankful for the sculptors, painters and writers whose souls have been stirred by great visions, and who have created wonderful art which has come down through the ages and brings their message to me. I thank Thee for the pleasure they give me, the lessons they teach, and for the inspiration they put in my heart.

When I look at a painting, help me to think of the ideals and hard work that lie back of it; or as I read a fine book, may I realize that through its story some one is giving thy message to men. May I learn how to appreciate the best pictures and books and make them a part of my life. Help me shun what is cheap and cultivate a love for true art.

Amen.

THE STARS

TONIGHT the stars seem very close and bright, glowing in every part of the universe about me, millions and millions of other worlds. The glorious sight fills me with awe. How great is the power that made the stars and keeps them moving through space! How vast the universe is!

In the stillness my heart yearns for Thee. My troubles are left behind as I reach up in prayer to the sky. I am glad that I can see such beauty, and pray that thy divine light may come into my life and make me pure and good. Help me think more often of thee and trust thee more. *Amen.*

MUSIC

I FEEL drawn to thee, O wonderful Spirit, as I hear the music of the masters. Its haunting melodies sweep me far away from everyday thoughts and I dream of beautiful things, and wonder who put this harmony into the hearts of men.

I thank thee for the way music makes my life richer, for bringing me rest and uplifting my mind to nobler thoughts. May I learn the mystery of which these great men sing, that my life may be pure like a perfect tone and in harmony with thy plan for me.

Amen.

AN EVENING MEDITATION

AS the evening shadows creep over the world I come to thank thee, O Father, for the blessings of today, for thy watchful care and for all the happiness that has come to me.

The glow of the setting sun draws me to the far-off horizon, making me think of the wonder of the world and pray to thee as the maker of its beauty. May I become nobler by watching the ways of Nature, more calm and trustful. May the spirit of the quiet evening come into the hearts of people everywhere. May sorrow and hatred die out and every one think of peace at this time when thy Spirit brings rest to the world. *Amen.*

IV

SPECIAL DAYS AND SEASONS

THE NEW YEAR

THE old year has gone. I see now how much more it could have brought me, how many chances I have wasted and failures I have made. Forgive me, Father, for I am deeply sorry. Help me to profit by last year's mistakes and to succeed this year and make up for the past.

My blunders and mistakes can be closed up and a new page given me on which to write, because thy love will give me a fresh chance. I cannot face the challenge of the new year alone, so I come to thee, Divine Friend. Be with me every day and help me to win through to all thy great purposes for me.

Amen.

THE SABBATH

HELP me to make the Sabbath different from the rest of the week, a day of special devotion to Thee. May I use it for the development of my spiritual life, by resting from my daily work, by reading the Bible and good books, by attending church and praying.

Help me every Sunday to do one definite deed of service for others. May I not waste this sacred day through worthless pleasures and indifference, but use it to awaken my mind to a richer friendship with thee. May this be the measuring day when I check on my life and get a new hold on the purposes that I should follow. *Amen.*

LENT

AS the Master studied in the wilderness in order that he might plan his life in harmony with thee, so I seek to know thy will, O Father. May these days of Lent be the high tide of my religious life. Help me to take time to think of thee and to study and pray that I may learn to live a nobler life. May this season bring me closer to Jesus' ideals. Let me lose my life for his sake and follow him whole-heartedly, serving as he served and daring as he dared.

I pray that I may be a full-fledged disciple of Christ. I dedicate myself to follow him.

Amen.

EASTER

GIVER of life, who art awakening the world to springtime loveliness, wake my heart to the glory of this day. Help me to realize the glorious life that I may lead. Send into my mind the currents of spring that I may grow above the wrong ways that I have followed and leave my old self as the bird soars from its low nest up into the summer air. Let me rise from the selfish desires of my life as the flower rises into its beauty.

A great love comes over me and I long to live my life for thee, to be blameless before thee. As Jesus conquered the temptations of the world and the darkness of death, help me to live in his triumphant faith. May I yield myself up completely to thee and win the Easter victory over weakness and evil. Flood my heart with the power and joy of spring.

Amen.

COMMENCEMENT

I AM happy today, for I have reached a goal in my life. I pour out my thanks, O Father, for the privilege of going to school and the thrill of standing with my classmates to receive recognition for my years of work. I thank thee for my parents and teachers and all who have given me these opportunities. I pray especially today for guidance in the future. I must go out into the world to make my own judgments and choose my own work. Help me to make the right choices. Keep me from yielding to short-cut temptations to success which cannot give me real happiness. Help me to choose work which has challenge and honor in it, which will make my life happy and of service to my community.

Amen.

MY BIRTHDAY

I THANK thee today, dear Father, for thy gifts during the years of my life, for health, a happy home, the privileges that have been mine and the pleasures I have enjoyed. I am grateful that I was born into a home where I was welcomed and loved.

Help me to live a better life this year and prove myself more deserving of my blessings. May each birthday find me with a clearer conscience because I have done what is right and have taken some forward step. I dedicate myself today to the ideal of Christian manhood. *Amen.*

LABOR DAY

ON this day which is kept in honor of the workers of the world, I pray for thy blessing on all who labor. I think how different life would be if it were not for those who keep the wheels of industry and commerce in motion. Help all today who are out of employment and in need of bread. May justice guide our industrial life. May no one be a slave or be forced to work under conditions that deny men a fair chance. Make the Golden Rule the guiding motive of all work everywhere.

I want to cast in my lot with those who labor. Help me to find my place in life and to throw myself into work for some great ideal. *Amen.*

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

I AM glad today; my heart is thrilled with the thought of returning to school, of seeing my old schoolmates, of getting back into the games, the parties and good times of the year. I am thankful for this happy life, for the opportunity to get an education, and for my school and its ideals.

Help me to make scholarship my highest aim, and to plan my time so as to have plenty of fun and exercise without neglecting my studies. May I do my part to uphold the honor of the school and to make this year the best in all my life. *Amen.*

ARMISTICE DAY

GOD OF LOVE, send thy Spirit into the hearts of men on this Peace Day which is kept by so many nations. Help us to see the folly of war, its brutality and injustice, its destruction of all that Jesus taught us to hold sacred.

May we be big enough to see that the people of all nations are brothers who want to live in peace with one another. Teach us how to reason out our differences, to practice good will, and to work for the day when war will be outlawed from the world. Give us strength to stand for peace and follow the Master's great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *Amen.*

THANKSGIVING

WHEN the harvests are being gathered in and the woods and fields are gold and red, I think of the first Thanksgiving when the Pilgrims gave thanks. If they could be grateful in their dangers and hardships, how much more I should be for my warm home, good food and clothes, for schools, hospitals and churches, and the peace and comforts which they never had.

Help me to remember gratefully how much I owe to my forefathers, to the leaders of America today, and to my parents. I know that I am very fortunate compared with boys in other lands, and that my life has many blessings. O Giver of these beautiful autumn days, I thank thee for all thy gifts! *Amen.*

CHRISTMAS

AS the church bells ring out in the crisp morning air and my home is gay with the symbols of Christmas, gratitude fills my heart for this wonderful day. I thank thee for the birth of Jesus, for this anniversary kept in his memory through the centuries, for the magical influence of his life which makes people forget themselves and think of others. The world is cheerful, full of tenderness and good will.

O Father, why cannot every day be like Christmas, with friendliness ruling the earth! May there be no more wars and horrible suffering. May love melt away all hatred and unfairness from the hearts of men and bring peace everywhere. *Amen.*

V

THE IDEAL PRAYER

THE IDEAL PRAYER

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom
come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our
debtors. And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil: For thine is the
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for
ever and ever. *Amen.*

